

**Official Response to the Performance Audit of the Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Delayed-Release Chinook Salmon  
From the Department of Fish and Wildlife  
April 5, 2010**

**Issue:** The Department does not meet the statutory goal to release three million delayed-release Chinook salmon annually. However, the goal does not align with hatchery management best practice, and the low contribution rate and high cost per contributed fish make it an ineffective and inefficient strategy for restoring the Puget Sound recreational fishery.

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

The Department of Fish and Wildlife concurs with the issue as outlined in the report. The three million delayed-release Chinook goal was not sustainable due to environmental constraints and genetic risks posed to federal ESA listed Puget Sound Chinook.

**Recommendation 3:** If the Department continues to produce delayed-release Chinook, it should define the term, including which yearlings to count as delayed-release Chinook.

**AGENCY RESPONSE:**

The Department concurs with the recommendation.

**Action Steps and Timeframe:**

- The Department will develop and formalize by December 31, 2010 a definition for delayed-release Chinook as it relates to which yearlings to count in the Program.